



Senate candidate Tim Kaine (D-VA) speaks at a forum during the “America Counts on Us” campaign.

## NALC joins federal unions to defend against political attack

**A** coalition of 30 unions and other groups representing federal workers, including NALC, launched a campaign to defend federal workers from political

attacks with a forum for Senate candidates in Virginia last month.

Some politicians use federal employees as “the all-purpose punching bag in American political life,” said former Virginia Gov. Tim Kaine, the Democratic candidate. “That, I find revolting. Those who would perpetuate the notion that public employees are somehow not willing to sacrifice, they haven’t been paying attention.”

The “America Counts on Us” campaign by the Federal-Postal Coalition is sponsoring candidate forums in key House and Senate races across the country to get politicians on record about how they would treat government employees. Former Sen. George Allen did not attend the Virginia forum, but that didn’t stop Kaine from taking Allen to task for his repeated attacks on federal workers.

“What kind of CEO would wage war on his own workforce?” Kaine asked. Bashing

your own workers and cutting pay and benefits, he said, “is not a management model that works.”

Federal workers have endured repeated attacks, rhetorical and legislative, from politicians lately. Most of the federal workforce is still under a two-year pay freeze, and beginning next year, new hires will pay an additional 2.3 percent of their salary toward their retirement. The Republican-controlled House passed a bill this year, sponsored by Rep. Paul Ryan (R-WI), to boost the retirement contribution by all federal employees by 5 percent.

Allen has joined the chorus of verbal attacks on federal workers on the campaign trail. Kaine criticized Allen for calling federal employees “sanctimonious social engineers” at his campaign events. During his term in the Senate, Allen earned a 13 percent legislative vote rating from the AFL-CIO—meaning he only voted with labor 13 percent of the time.

The America Counts on Us campaign will hold more events with candidates this fall, and letter carriers are urged to attend. To find out about events in your area, watch for alerts through the e-Activist Network. To sign up as an e-Activist or make sure your contact information is up to date, go to [nalc.org/depart/legpol](http://nalc.org/depart/legpol). ☒

## UNITE HERE calls for boycott of Hyatt



**S**tanding up to an accused violator of workers’ rights, a coalition of hundreds of unions and other groups has announced a boycott of most Hyatt hotels worldwide.

“Hyatt systematically abuses housekeepers and other hotel workers, and it is unacceptable in 2012 that women endure debilitating injuries as a result of the work they do cleaning rooms,” said John Wilhelm, president of UNITE HERE, a union that represents hospitality workers. “We call on Hyatt to end its systematic abuse of housekeepers and adopt the recommendations made by the federal government to reduce the physical strain associated with housekeeping work.”

The launching of the boycott in July was accompanied by a week of demonstrations at Hyatt hotels and other actions in 20 U.S. cities, including Los

Angeles, Honolulu, San Francisco, Chicago, Baltimore, Indianapolis and Boston. A broad collection of labor, business, religious, academic and advocacy groups and individuals, including letter carriers, have signed on as boycott participants. To date, workers and activists in India, Britain, Israel, the Philippines and Australia have supported the campaign with protests and demonstrations.

According to UNITE HERE, Hyatt has replaced many longtime employees with minimum-wage temporary workers and imposed dangerous workloads on those who remain. The global boycott is an escalation of a multi-year campaign to get fair contracts that has involved demonstrations and strikes. The union has called on supporters to visit [hyatthurts.org](http://hyatthurts.org) to learn more and to vote for Hyatt as the “worst hotel employer in America.” ☒